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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 COLOMBO 002137

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SUBJECT: SRI LANKAN/MALDIVES: 2002 ANNUAL TERRORISM
REPORTS

REF: STATE 201772

11. MISSION'S RESPONSE TO REFTEL REQUESTING INPUT FOR THE
DEPARTMENT'S 2002 ANNUAL TERRORISM REPORT FOLLOWS. DATA
ON SRI LANKA IS CONTAINED IN PARA TWO AND DATA ON THE
MALDIVES IN PARA THREE. PARA 2 IS KEYED TO QUESTIONS A
THROUGH K IN PARA TWO OF REFTEL. PARA 3 CONTAINS A
REVIEW OF THE SITUATION IN THE MALDIVES.

SRI LANKA

12. (U) DATA ON SRI LANKA:

A -- IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001 TERROR
ATTACKS, THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT IMMEDIATELY DECLARED
ITS WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE WITH THE U.S. IN THE GLOBAL
CAMPAIGN AGAINST TERRORISM AND THE GOVERNMENT HAS
MAINTAINED THAT POLICY THROUGHOUT 2002. SRI LANKA HAS
ACCEDED TO 10 OF THE 12 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS (SEE
SECTION F FOR MORE DETAILS) THAT DEAL WITH COMBATING
TERRORISM AND TOOK STEPS TO IMPLEMENT UNSCR 1333 AND
1373, WHICH BLOCKED THE ASSETS OF TERRORIST ENTITIES.

B -- THERE HAVE BEEN NO CASES IN SRI LANKA DURING THE
PAST YEAR OF ACTS OF TERRORISM AGAINST OR AFFECTING U.S.
CITIZENS OR FACILITIES. ALL INDICATIONS ARE THAT THE
SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT WOULD EXTEND EVERY EFFORT TO
PROTECT U.S. CITIZENS OR PROSECUTE THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR
ACTS OF TERRORISM. IN REGARDS TO DOMESTIC TERRORISM,
THE GOVERNMENT AND THE LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM
(LTTE) HAVE OBSERVED A CEASEFIRE SINCE DECEMBER 2001.
THE TWO SIDES HAVE ALSO BEGUN PEACE TALKS. IN NOVEMBER
2002, A COLOMBO COURT CONVICTED LTTE LEADER VELUPILLAI
PRABHAKARAN AND THREE OTHER LTTE MEMBERS IN ABSENTIA FOR
PLANNING A JANUARY 31, 1996, BOMBING IN COLOMBO THAT
KILLED 76 AND INJURED HUNDREDS. THEY WERE SENTENCED TO
LONG-TERM PRISON SENTENCES. THE LTTE HAS CATEGORICALLY
REJECTED THE VALIDITY OF THE COURT'S RULING.

C -- THE ISSUE OF EXTRADITION IN RELATION TO TERRORIST
ACTS DID NOT ARISE IN SRI LANKA. THE UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT HAS ASKED FOR ASSISTANCE FROM THE SRI LANKAN
GOVERNMENT TO LOCATE AND EXTRADITE INDIVIDUALS IN THREE
CRIMINAL CASES. ALTHOUGH THE INDIVIDUALS IN QUESTION
HAVE NOT BEEN LOCATED AND MAY BE IN LTTE-CONTROLLED
AREAS, THE GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKAN WAS RESPONSIVE TO
USG CONCERNS AND REQUESTS. THERE IS NO INFORMATION THAT
INDICATES THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT EXTEND THE
SAME COOPERATION IN CASES INVOLVING TERRORIST-RELATED
ACTIVITIES.

D -- MISSION HAS NO KNOWLEDGE OF SIGNIFICANT IMPEDIMENTS
TO GSL PROSECUTION AND/OR EXTRADITION OF SUSPECTED
TERRORISTS. IN FACT, THE SEPTEMBER 1999 SIGNING OF A
GENERAL EXTRADITION TREATY BETWEEN THE U.S. AND SRI

LANKA (RATIFIED BY THE U.S. SENATE IN OCTOBER AND SIGNED BY THE PRESIDENT IN NOVEMBER 1999), FACILITATED EXTRADITION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. SRI LANKA HAS ALSO SIGNED THE 1988 SAARC REGIONAL CONVENTION ON THE SUPPRESSION OF TERRORISM, WHICH DESIGNATES CERTAIN ACTS SPECIFICALLY AS TERRORIST ACTS AND NOT AS POLITICAL ACTS, THEREBY NULLIFYING ATTEMPTS BY TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS TO CLAIM POLITICAL MOTIVATIONS FOR VIOLENCE. THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT IS ALSO WORKING WITH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO DRAFT A MUTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE TREATY.

E -- SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES HAVE MADE NUMEROUS PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL WAR ON TERRORISM AND HAVE CONDEMNED TERRORIST INCIDENTS, SUCH AS THE TERRORIST BOMBING IN BALI. THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT BEEN INVOLVED IN INTERNATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS OF TERRORISM. IT IS CURRENTLY FOCUSING ON THE DOMESTIC PEACE PROCESS TO BRING TO AN END AN ALMOST 20 YEAR CONFLICT WITH THE LTTE (SEE SECTION I FOR MORE DETAILS).

F -- DURING 2002, THE GSL HAS FOCUSED ON STABILIZING THE PEACE PROCESS WITH THE LTTE. SRI LANKA HAS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED IN COUNTERTERRORISM LEGISLATION SEMINARS ORGANIZED BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. SRI LANKA IS PARTY TO 10 OF THE 12 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS THAT FOCUS ON COMBATING TERRORISM, INCLUDING THE TOKYO, HAGUE AND MONTREAL CONVENTIONS AGAINST TERRORISM. THE GSL HAS REQUESTED ADDITIONAL TRAINING FROM THE UNITED STATES GEARED TOWARDS PREPARING THE SRI LANKAN MILITARY TO ASSIST IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM.

G -- NOT APPLICABLE - THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT DOES NOT SUPPORT TERRORISM.

H -- THE GSL HAS MADE NO PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN SUPPORT OF A TERRORIST-SUPPORTING COUNTRY ON A TERRORISM ISSUE. THAT SAID, LARGELY BECAUSE OF ITS "NON-ALIGNED" STATUS, SRI LANKA HAS NOT PARTICIPATED ACTIVELY IN INTERNATIONAL CONDEMNATION OF THE TERRORIST ACTIVITIES OF CUBA, IRAN, IRAQ, LIBYA, NORTH KOREA, SYRIA, AND SUDAN. FOR THE SAME REASONS, ITS CRITICISM OF ANTI-ISRAELI TERRORISM HAS BEEN MUTED.

I -- THERE WAS NO DISCERNIBLE CHANGE IN THE GOVERNMENT'S STRONG INTERNATIONAL ANTI-TERRORISM POSITION IN 2002. DOMESTICALLY THERE WAS A DRAMATIC SHIFT IN THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT TOWARDS THE LTTE, WHICH IS DESIGNATED AS A FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATION (FTO) BY THE UNITED STATES. THE GSL IS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN A PEACE PROCESS WITH THE LTTE TO BRING AN END TO A 19-YEAR-OLD CONFLICT AND IS ESTIMATED TO HAVE KILLED OVER 64,000 PEOPLE. ON DECEMBER 24, 2001, THE LTTE AND GSL ANNOUNCED UNILATERAL CEASEFIRES. ON FEBRUARY 22, 2002, THE TWO SIDES SIGNED A CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT THAT INCLUDED STEPS TO DEESCALATE THE CONFLICT, ON SEPTEMBER 4 THE GSL LEGALIZED THE LTTE, AND ON SEPTEMBER 16 THE TWO SIDES BEGAN PEACE TALKS. IN ADDITION TO THE RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED ON THE LTTE BY OTHER STATES, THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO VIEW THE USG'S DESIGNATION OF THE LTTE AS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION AS A POSITIVE MEASURE. IT SITES THE DESIGNATION, ALONG WITH THE POST-SEPTEMBER 11 GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM, AS ONE OF THE REASONS THE LTTE HAS COME TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE.

J -- THE GSL HAS DIRECTED FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO FREEZE ASSETS OF TERRORIST GROUPS COVERED UNDER UNSCR 1333 AND 1373. WHERE THE U.S. HAS REQUESTED THE GSL TO FREEZE ASSETS OF GROUPS NOT COVERED UNDER THE UNSCRS, THE GSL HAS DIRECTED FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO NOTIFY THE CENTRAL BANK OF ANY TRANSACTIONS BY THESE GROUPS. THE USG CONDUCTS MILITARY-TO-MILITARY ANTI-TERRORISM TRAINING WITH GSL TROOPS.

K-I -- THE ISSUE OF COOPERATING WITH THE USG IN APPREHENDING, CONVICTING, AND PUNISHING INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTS OF TERRORISM HAS NOT ARISEN.

MISSION HAS NO REASON TO BELIEVE THE GSL WOULD NOT COOPERATE IN THE EVENT THAT SUCH COOPERATION WAS REQUESTED.

K-II -- THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS MADE SEVERAL REQUESTS TO THE GSL FOR ADDITIONAL SECURITY MEASURES FOR U.S. PERSONNEL AND FACILITIES IN SRI LANKA. THE GSL HAS MET ALL REQUESTS EXPEDITIOUSLY. THESE REQUESTS WERE MADE TO ENHANCE SECURITY IN GENERAL AND NOT IN RESPONSE TO ANY IDENTIFIABLE THREAT.

MALDIVES

13. (U) CONSISTING OF ALMOST 1,200 ISLANDS STRETCHED OVER APPROXIMATELY 500 MILES NORTH TO SOUTH IN THE INDIAN OCEAN WITH A POPULATION OF APPROXIMATELY 270,000, THE REPUBLIC OF THE MALDIVES HAS NO KNOWN INDIGENOUS TERRORISM PROBLEM. THE MALDIVIAN GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, HAS EXPRESSED CONCERNS ABOUT THE POSSIBLE TRANSIT OF TERRORISTS THROUGH THE COUNTRY AND ALSO OVER THE ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING SERMONS, OF SOME HARD-LINE RELIGIOUS ELEMENTS IN THE COUNTRY. SOME OF THESE ALLEGED HARD-LINERS HAVE BEEN DETAINED AND TRIED ON VARIOUS CHARGES. MALDIVIANS ALSO REMAIN FOCUSED ON PREVENTING A REPEAT OF THE EVENTS OF 1988 WHEN A FORMER MALDIVIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL LAUNCHED A COUP ATTEMPT WITH THE HELP OF SRI LANKAN TERRORIST ELEMENTS. THE COUP FAILED DUE TO THE INTERVENTION OF THE INDIAN ARMED FORCES. DESPITE THESE CONCERNS, THE MALDIVES HAS EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT IT CAN DEAL WITH POTENTIAL PROBLEMS. DURING AN ATTEMPTED HIJACKING OF A FLIGHT TRANSITING THROUGH THE MALDIVES FROM BOMBAY IN EARLY SEPTEMBER 2002, THE NATIONAL SECURITY SERVICE RESPONDED IN A PROFESSIONAL MANNER AND WAS FORTHCOMING AND COOPERATIVE WITH USG OFFICIALS REQUESTING INFORMATION ABOUT THE INCIDENT. IN TERMS OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS, THE MALDIVES HAS TAKEN STEPS TO IMPLEMENT UNSCR 1333 AND 1337, WHICH BLOCK THE ASSETS OF TERRORIST ENTITIES. THE MALDIVES HAS ALSO BECOME A PARTY TO THE MAJORITY OF THE 12 INTERNATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CONVENTIONS.

WILLS